



United States Department of the Interior
National Business Center
Aviation Management
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DOI AM OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM NO. 06-49

Subject: Standards for Fire Use of National Guard Helicopters

Effective Date: January 1, 2006

Supersedes: OPM 05-49 issued January 1, 2005

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.1 Purpose. This OPM establishes policy for the approval of National Guard helicopter flight crews in the fire suppression mission.

.2 General. Each year Aviation Management (DOI AM) receives requests to enter into interagency agreements with the National Guard to augment the fire suppression abilities of the bureaus. The Forest Service regions have agreements with many of the National Guard State headquarters. This policy is for procuring National Guard helicopters for emergency fire suppression and are exempt from the requirements of 351 DM 4.3.

.3 Policy. Chapter 70, section 70.5, of the *Military Use Handbook* will be used as the standard for pilot training and qualification for the use of National Guard helicopters in the fire suppression mission. Any National Guard flight crew meeting these pilot training and qualification standards may be used by Interior bureaus in fire suppression activities provided that the appropriate interagency agreements between Aviation Management and the respective National Guard State is in place.

.4 Procedures. Approval requests for use of National Guard helicopters in fire suppression missions should be initiated prior to the start of fire season and should be routed through the bureau National Aviation Manager to the servicing Aviation Management office. Request should allow adequate time for Aviation Management to coordinate and conduct interagency training. Aviation Management will issue letters of approval for aircraft and pilots qualified for interagency fire missions. Questions should be directed to the appropriate Aviation Management Office.

/s/ Mark L. Bathrick
Associate Director